

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
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P R 161755Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9912
INFO AMCONSUL FLORENCE
AMEMBASSY BONN
ZNE/AMCONSUL GENOA 2123
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL MILAN
AMCONSUL NAPLES
AMCONSUL PALERMO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
SHAPEUSNR
USCINCEUR, VAIHINGEN, GERMANY
USDOCOSOUTH
USMISSION USNATO

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USDOSOCOUTH FOR INTAF

SHAPEUSNR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, IT
SUBJECT: ITALIAN GOVERNMENT CRISIS: POSSIBLE SCENARIOS

BEGIN SUMMARY. PRIME MINISTER ANDREOTTI RESIGNED THIS
MORNING (JANUARY 16). IT IS TAKEN FOR GRANTED THAT HE WILL BE ASKED
TO FORM A NEW GOVERNMENT. HIS TASK WILL BE DIFFICULT
AND NO DOUBT PROTRACTED; SHOULD HE FAIL, LEONE WILL PROBABLY
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TURN TO ANOTHER DC LEADER. FIVE OPTIONS ARE CURRENTLY
UNDER DISCUSSION: (1) A GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL
EMERGENCY (NOW APPEARS IMPOSSIBLE); (2) A GOVERNMENT OF
THE LEFT (MOST UNLIKELY AND MATHEMATICALLY DIFFICULT);
(3) CONTINUATION OF THE PRESENT CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC
GOVERNMENT (AND AN EXPANDED PROGRAM ACCORD) WITH THE
COMMUNIST PARTY STILL ABSTAINING; (4) A NEW CHRISTIAN

DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT WITH COMMUNIST PARTICIPATION IN THE PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY; (5) A NEW CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT-SOCIALIST COALITION IN WHICH COMMUNIST PARTICIPATION IN THE MAJORITY WOULD BE "ADDITIVE" RATHER THAN "DETERMINING." SHOULD ALL EFFORTS TO FIND A NEW GOVERNMENT FORMULA FAIL, EARLY LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS WOULD BE UNAVOIDABLE. END SUMMARY.

1. THE ANDREOTTI GOVERNMENT RESIGNED TODAY FOLLOWING AN OFFICIAL STATEMENT TO PRIME MINISTER ANDREOTTI ON JANUARY 14 BY THE PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SOCIALIST, REPUBLICAN AND COMMUNIST PARTIES THAT THEY NO LONGER SUPPORT THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT. FOLLOWING A CABINET MEETING AT 11:00 THIS MORNING, PRIME MINISTER ANDREOTTI FORMALLY PRESENTED HIS RESIGNATION TO PRESIDENT LEONE. IT IS ANTICIPATED THAT BY MID-WEEK LEONE WILL ASK ANDREOTTI TO TRY TO FORM A NEW GOVERNMENT. ANDREOTTI WILL THEN ENTER INTO CONSULTATIONS WITH THE OTHER PARTIES ON A NEW GOVERNMENT FORMULA.

2. CONTRARY TO THE HOPES OF MOST ITALIAN POLITICIANS, THE CRISIS HAS OPENED "IN THE DARK," IN CONDITIONS REplete WITH UNCERTAINTIES AND UNPREDICTABLE VARIABLES. THE CRISIS IS EXPECTED TO BE PROTRACTED (SOME PREDICT TWO MONTHS) SINCE THE NEGOTIATIONS WILL INVOLVE AN EFFORT TO REVISE LAST JULY'S SIX-PARTY PROGRAM ACCORD. THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PARTIES ARE DISPOSED TO SEEK A NEGOTIATED SOLUTION, BUT THEIR OPENING POSITIONS ARE RIGID AND FAR APART. THE POSSIBILITY THAT ANDREOTTI'S MISSION WILL END IN FAILURE CANNOT BE EXCLUDED. IN THIS CASE LEONE WOULD PROBABLY TURN TO SOME OTHER CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC LEADER, SUCH AS FANFANI, FORLANI OR PICCOLI. WERE IT TO PROVE IMPOSSIBLE TO FORM A NEW GOVERNMENT, NEW PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS WOULD THEN BE IMPOSSIBLE TO AVOID. AT THE PRESENT TIME, THE FOLLOWING OPTIONS ARE BEING DISCUSSED:

3. GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY: THIS IS THE OFFICIAL POSITION OF THE PCI, PSI, AND PRI. IT CALLS FOR AN EMERGENCY COALITION OF THE SIX "CONSTITUTIONAL PARTIES" TO RESOLVE THE CRISIS. THE SOLUTION APPEARS WHOLLY HYPOTHETICAL, HOWEVER, SINCE THE DC HAS FIRMLY REJECTED IT, SAYING THAT IT WOULD GO TO ELECTIONS FIRST. THE SMALL LIBERAL AND SOCIAL-DEMOCRAT PARTIES SHARE THE DC'S POSITION.

4. GOVERNMENT OF THE LEFT: SUGGESTED BY SOME SOCIALISTS AS A MEANS OF AVOIDING NEW ELECTIONS IN VIEW OF THE DC'S REJECTION OF AN EMERGENCY GOVERNMENT. AN

UNLIKELY HYPOTHESIS, HOSEVER, SINCE IT WOULD REQUIRE
THE PCI TO ABANDON ITS "HISTORIC COMPROMISE" STRATEGY
OF ALLIANCE WITH THE DC. IT WOULD ALSO BE
MATHEMATICALLY IMPOSSIBLE WITHOUT THE IMPROBABLE
INCLUSION OF THE SOCIALISTS, REPUBLICANS, SOCIAL DEMOCRATS
AND EXTREMIST DEMOCRATIC PROLETARIANS.

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5. CONTINUATION OF CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT GOVERNMENT
WITH PCI ABSTAINING: THE DC WOULD FIND ACCEPTABLE CON-
TINUATION OF THE DC MINORITY GOVERNMENT OOR A NEW COALI-
LQON (DC-PRI OR DC-PRI-PSDI) IN WHICH THE
COMMUNISTS AND SOCIALISTS WOULD STILL PROVIDE ABSTENTION
SUPPORT. AS A SWEETENER, THE DC WOULD PROBABLY BE
WILLING TO CONCEDE SOME "TECHNICIAN" STAND-IN MINISTERS

NOMINATED BY THE LEFT PARTIES AND/OR THE PCI'S
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RIGHT NOT TO ACCEPT CERTAIN, DISLIKED MINISTERS
IN THE GOVERNMENT. THE PCI AND PSI WOULD BE
OFFERED AN EXPANSION OF THE PROGRAM ACCORD (I.E. IN-
CLUSION IN THE "PROGRAM MAJORITY"), BUT THEY WOULD
BE EXCLUDED FROM PARTICIPATION IN THE PARLIAMENTARY
MAJORITY. SO FAR, HOWEVER, THE COMMUNISTS INSIST ON
THE NEED TO GO BEYOND THE ANDREOTTI ABSTENTION FORMULA.
THE SOCIALISTS FOLLOW SUIT.

6. NEW CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT GOVERNMENT WITH PCI IN THE
PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY: IN THIS CASE, THE COMMUNISTS
(AND SOCIALISTS) WOULD JOIN THE PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY
OF A NEW DC MINORITY GOVERNMENT OR COALITION (DC-PRI
OR DC-PRI-PSDI). THE PCI WOULD SHIFT FROM ABSTAINING
TO VOTING IN FAVOR, A SOLUTION THE PCI HAS INDICATED
IT COULD ACCEPT. HOWEVER THE DC APPEARS TO EXCLUDE
THIS OPTION, AT LEAST FOR NOW. THE DC DIRECTORATE
HAS LEFT THE DOOR OPEN, HOWEVER, BY REFERRING
TO THE NEED TO ACHIEVE "POLITICAL SOLIDARITY" THROUGH
A NEW "PROGRAMMATIC CONSENSUS." THE DC WOULD HAVE
TO REJECT THIS OPTION UNLESS IT COULD OVERCOME
STRONG RESISTANCE OT IT WITHIN THE PARTY.

7. NEW DC-SOCIALIST COALITION WITH PCI IN THE
PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY: IN THIS OPTION, THE PCI
WOULD PARTICIPATE IN THE PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY OF
A DC-SOCIALIST COALITION (WHICH COULD INCLUDE OTHER
FORMER CENTER-LEFT COALITION PARTNERS). HOWEVER,
TH PCI'S FAVORABLE VOTE IN THE MAJORITY WOULD
BE CONSIDERED "ADDITIVE" RATHER THAN "DETERMINING"
SINCE ITS VOTE WOULD NOT BE TECHNICALLY REQUIRED TO
FORM THE GOVERNMENT. THIS OPTION APPEARS
HIGHLY HYPOTHETICAL, HOWEVER, SINCE IT IS UNLIKELY
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THAT THE PCI WOULD AGREE TO A FORMUAL WHICH DISCRIMINATES
AGAINST IT VIS-A-VIS THE SOCIALISTS. THE PSI HAS
ALSO CONSISTENTLY REJECTED PARTICIPATION IN ANY
COALITION WITH THE DC WHICH DENIES EQUAL STATUS TO
THE PCI.

8. EARLY ELECTIONS: FOR A VARIETY
OF REASONS, ALL THE PARTIES HAVE STATED THEY WISH

TO AVOID NEW ELECTIONS. THE THREAT OF NEW ELECTIONS,
HOWEVER, CAN BE EXPECTED TO BE USED BY THE MAJOR PARTIES
AS NEGOTIATING PLOY DURING THE NEGOTIATIONS. THE
DC WILL USE IT TO TRY TO MODERATE PCI AND PSI DEMANDS.
THE LEFT PARTIES WILL SEEK TO CONDITION THE DC'S
RESPONSE WITH A SIMILAR THREAT. GENERALLY, HOWEVER,
MOST OBSERVERS AGREE THAT THE DC HAS MORE TO GAIN (OR
LESS TO LOSE) IN A NEW ELECTORAL CONTEST. THE DC
WILL LOSE THE ELCTION CARD, HOWEVER, WHEN THE SIX-MONTH "WHITE
PERIOD" BEGINS ON JUNE 24 AFTER WHICH PRESIDENT LEONE
(DC) WILL BE CONSTITUTIONALLY RESTRAINED FROM EXERCISING
HIS AUTHORITY TO DISSOLVE PARLIAMENT. AFTER THE "WHITE
PERIOD" BEGINS, ELECTIONS COULD ONLY BE HELD IF PRESIDENT LEONE WERE
TO RESIGN EARLY (THE ELECTION OF A SUCCESSOR BY PARLIAMENT WOULD
TAKE PLACE IMMEDIATELY). GARDNER

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